

porarily shaken by the philosophy of Nietzsche. I had been reading parts of *The Genealogy of Morals* and the whole of *The Will to Power*. Nietzsche's glorification of power—in his theory all life expressed the will to power—was an outgrowth of his contempt for ordinary morals. He attacked the whole of the Hebraic-Christian morality—with its virtues of piety and humility, its otherworldliness and its attitude toward suffering—as the glorification of weakness, as making virtues out of necessity and impotence. He looked to the development of a superman who would surpass man as man surpassed the ape.

Then one Sunday afternoon I traveled to Philadelphia to hear a sermon by Dr. Mordecai Johnson, president of Howard University. He was there to preach for the Fellowship House of Philadelphia. Dr. Johnson had just returned from a trip to India, and, to my great interest, he spoke of the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. His message was so profound and electrifying that I left the meeting and bought a half-dozen books on Gandhi's life and works.

[Like most people, I had heard of Gandhi, but I had never studied him seriously. As I read I became deeply fascinated by his campaigns of nonviolent resistance. I was particularly moved by the Salt March to the Sea and his numerous fasts. The whole concept of "Satyagraha" (*Satya* is truth which equals love, and *agraha* is force; "Satyagraha," therefore, means truth-force or love force) was profoundly significant to me. As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform. Prior to reading Gandhi, I had about concluded that the ethics of Jesus were only effective in individual relationship. The "turn the other cheek" philosophy and the "love your enemies" philosophy were only valid, I felt,

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when individuals were in conflict with other individuals; when
 racial groups and nations were in conflict a more realistic ap-
 proach seemed necessary. But after reading Gandhi, I saw how
 utterly mistaken I was.

Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love
 ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a
 powerful and effective social force on a large scale. Love for
 Gandhi was a potent instrument for social and collective trans-
 formation. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and non-
 violence that I discovered the method for social reform that I
 had been seeking for so many months. The intellectual and moral
 satisfaction that I failed to gain from the utilitarianism of Bentham
 and Mill, the revolutionary methods of Marx and Lenin, the social-
 contracts theory of Hobbes, the "back to nature" optimism of
 Rousseau, and the superman philosophy of Nietzsche, I found
 in the nonviolent resistance philosophy of Gandhi. I came to feel
 that this was the only morally and practically sound method open
 to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.

But my intellectual odyssey to nonviolence did not end here.
 During my last year in theological school, I began to read the
 works of Reinhold Niebuhr. The prophetic and realistic elements
 in Niebuhr's passionate style and profound thought were appeal-
 ing to me, and I became so enamored of his social ethics that I
 almost fell into the trap of accepting uncritically everything he
 wrote.

About this time I read Niebuhr's critique of the pacifist posi-
 tion. Niebuhr had himself once been a member of the pacifist
 ranks. For several years, he had been national chairman of the
 Fellowship of Reconciliation. His break with pacifism came in
 the early thirties, and the first full statement of his criticism of

pacifism was in *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. Here he argued that there was no intrinsic moral difference between violent and nonviolent resistance. The social consequences of the two methods were different, he contended, but the differences were in degree rather than kind. Later Niebuhr began emphasizing the irresponsibility of relying on nonviolent resistance when there was no ground for believing that it would be successful in preventing the spread of totalitarian tyranny. It could only be successful, he argued, if the groups against whom the resistance was taking place had some degree of moral conscience, as was the case in Gandhi's struggle against the British. Niebuhr's ultimate rejection of pacifism was based primarily on the doctrine of man. He argued that pacifism failed to do justice to the reformation doctrine of justification by faith, substituting for it a sectarian perfectionism which believes "that divine grace actually lifts men out of the sinful contradictions of history and establishes him above the sins of the world."

At first, Niebuhr's critique of pacifism left me in a state of confusion. As I continued to read, however, I came to see more and more the shortcomings of his position. For instance, many of his statements revealed that he interpreted pacifism as a sort of passive nonresistance to evil expressing naïve trust in the power of love. But this was a serious distortion. My study of Gandhi convinced me that true pacifism is not nonresistance to evil, but nonviolent resistance to evil. Between the two positions, there is a world of difference. Gandhi resisted evil with as much vigor and power as the violent resister, but he resisted with love instead of hate. True pacifism is not unrealistic submission to evil power, as Niebuhr contends. It is rather a courageous confrontation of evil by the power of love, in the faith that it is better to be the recipient of violence than the inflicter of it, since the latter only multiplies the existence of violence and bitterness in the universe,

where we "invite" violence?

while the former and thereby bring

In spite of the Niebuhr's philosophy constructively influence contemporary characteristic of falling into the Karl Barth, or the Hegelians. Moreover, nature, especially is keenly aware relation between reminder of the These elements illusions of a super the dangers of a potential for good evil as well. More complexity of man's collective evil.

Many pacifists, unwarranted optimism toward self-right under the influence of my study pacifist organization realistic pacifism not as sinful felt then, and I appeal if he did that the Christ

Many pacifists, I felt, failed to see this. All too many had an unwarranted optimism concerning man and leaned unconsciously toward self-righteousness. It was my revolt against these attitudes under the influence of Niebuhr that accounts for the fact that in spite of my strong leaning toward pacifism, I never joined a pacifist organization. After reading Niebuhr, I tried to arrive at a realistic pacifism. In other words, I came to see the pacifist position not as sinless but as the lesser evil in the circumstances. I felt then, and I feel now, that the pacifist would have a greater appeal if he did not claim to be free from the moral dilemmas that the Christian nonpacifist confronts.

The next stage of my intellectual pilgrimage to nonviolence came during my doctoral studies at Boston University. Here I had the opportunity to talk to many exponents of nonviolence, both students and visitors to the campus. Boston University School of Theology, under the influence of Dean Walter Muelder and Professor Allen Knight Chalmers, had a deep sympathy for pacifism. Both Dean Muelder and Dr. Chalmers had a passion for social justice that stemmed, not from a superficial optimism, but from a deep faith in the possibilities of human beings when they allowed themselves to become co-workers with God. It was at Boston University that I came to see that Niebuhr had over-emphasized the corruption of human nature. His pessimism concerning human nature was not balanced by an optimism concerning divine nature. He was so involved in diagnosing man's sickness of sin that he overlooked the cure of grace.

I studied philosophy and theology at Boston University under Edgar S. Brightman and L. Harold DeWolf. Both men greatly stimulated my thinking. It was mainly under these teachers that I studied personalistic philosophy—the theory that the clue to the meaning of ultimate reality is found in personality. This personal idealism remains today my basic philosophical position. Personalism's insistence that only personality—finite and infinite—is ultimately real strengthened me in two convictions: it gave me metaphysical and philosophical grounding for the idea of a personal God, and it gave me a metaphysical basis for the dignity and worth of all human personality.

Just before Dr. Brightman's death, I began studying the philosophy of Hegel with him. Although the course was mainly a study of Hegel's monumental work, *Phenomenology of Mind*, I spent my spare time reading his *Philosophy of History* and *Philosophy of Right*. There were points in Hegel's philosophy that I strongly disagreed with. For instance, his absolute idealism was rationally

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My study of philosophy and theology at Boston University under the influence of L. Harold DeWolf. Both men greatly influenced me. It was mainly under these teachers that I developed my philosophy—the theory that the clue to the meaning of reality is found in personality. This perception became today my basic philosophical position. I came to see that only personality—finite and infinite—provided the ground for meaning. It strengthened me in two convictions: it gave me philosophical grounding for the idea of a personal God, and it gave me a metaphysical basis for the dignity of human personality.

After Martin Luther King's death, I began studying the philosophy of Martin Heidegger. Although the course was mainly a study of his work, *Phenomenology of Mind*, I spent much time studying his *Philosophy of History* and *Philosophy of Language*. Heidegger's points in Hegel's philosophy that I strongly admired, his absolute idealism was rationally

unsound to me because it tended to swallow up the many in the one. But there were other aspects of his thinking that I found stimulating. His contention that "truth is the whole" led me to a philosophical method of rational coherence. His analysis of the dialectical process, in spite of its shortcomings, helped me to see that growth comes through struggle.

In 1954 I ended my formal training with all of these relatively divergent intellectual forces converging into a positive social philosophy. One of the main tenets of this philosophy was the conviction that nonviolent resistance was one of the most potent weapons available to oppressed people in their quest for social justice. At this time, however, I had merely an intellectual understanding and appreciation of the position, with no firm determination to organize it in a socially effective situation.

When I went to Montgomery as a pastor, I had not the slightest idea that I would later become involved in a crisis in which nonviolent resistance would be applicable. I neither started the protest nor suggested it. I simply responded to the call of the people for a spokesman. When the protest began, my mind, consciously or unconsciously, was driven back to the Sermon on the Mount, with its sublime teachings on love, and the Gandhian method of nonviolent resistance. As the days unfolded, I came to see the power of nonviolence more and more. Living through the actual experience of the protest, nonviolence became more than a method to which I gave intellectual assent; it became a commitment to a way of life. Many of the things that I had not cleared up intellectually concerning nonviolence were now solved in the sphere of practical action.

Since the philosophy of nonviolence played such a positive role in the Montgomery Movement, it may be wise to turn to a brief discussion of some basic aspects of this philosophy.

1a First, it must be emphasized that nonviolent resistance is not a method for cowards; it does resist. If one uses this method because he is afraid or merely because he lacks the instruments of violence, he is not truly nonviolent. This is why Gandhi often said that if cowardice is the only alternative to violence, it is better to fight. He made this statement conscious of the fact that there is always another alternative: no individual or group need submit to any wrong, nor need they use violence to right the wrong; there is the way of nonviolence resistance. This is ultimately the way of the strong man. It is not a method of stagnant passivity. The phrase "passive resistance" often gives the false impression that this is a sort of "do-nothing method" in which the resister quietly and passively accepts evil. But nothing is further from the truth. For while the nonviolent resister is passive in the sense that he is not physically aggressive toward his opponent, his mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade his opponent that he is wrong. The method is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually. It is not passive non-resistance to evil, it is active nonviolent resistance to evil.

2a A second basic fact that characterizes nonviolence is that it does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding. The nonviolent resister must often express his protest through noncooperation or boycotts, but he realizes that these are not ends themselves; they are merely means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of nonviolence is the creation of the beloved community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness.

3a A third characteristic of this method is that the attack is directed against forces of evil rather than against persons who happen to be doing the evil. It is evil that the nonviolent resister seeks to defeat, not the persons victimized by evil. If he is opposing racial

NVR - means of strengthening the moral ideal
"voice" is "the adversary" (not just
"persuade" cognitively. (change/shift values)

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injustice, the nonviolent resister's basic tension is not between race in Montgomery: "The tension is between the white people and Negro people. The tension is between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a way out, it is merely for fifty thousand Negroes to become forces of light. We are out to persons who may be unjust."

A fourth point that characterizes nonviolence is the willingness to accept suffering without retaliation. "We must have the capacity to suffer from the opponent without striking back," Gandhi said to his countrymen. "We have to flow before we gain our blood," Gandhi said to his countrymen. "We are willing to accept violence if necessary. He does not seek to dodge jail. He enters it 'as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber'."

One may well ask: "What is the purpose of this ordeal to which he invites the application of the ancient doctrine of nonviolence? The answer is found in the realization that suffering is redemptive. Suffering, the nonviolent resister believes, is of tremendous educational and transformative importance to people. It is not to be avoided alone, but have to be purchased with suffering. He continues: "Suffering is infinite. It is the only way of converting the jungle for converting the world which are otherwise shut to the world."

A fifth point concerning nonviolence is that it is not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. The nonviolent resister not only refuses to hate his opponent but he also refuses to hate himself.

UUDD - make opponent reflect on own values, function

* a - to convert, change the other
(self/ownself)

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injustice, the nonviolent resister has the vision to see that the basic tension is not between races. As I like to say to the people in Montgomery: "The tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is, at bottom, between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. And if there is a victory, it will be a victory not merely for fifty thousand Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light. We are out to defeat injustice and not white persons who may be unjust."

A fourth point that characterizes nonviolent resistance is a willingness to accept suffering without retaliation, to accept blows from the opponent without striking back. "Rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood," Gandhi said to his countrymen. The nonviolent resister is willing to accept violence if necessary, but never to inflict it. He does not seek to dodge jail. If going to jail is necessary, he enters it "as a bridegroom enters the bride's chamber."

One may well ask: "What is the nonviolent resister's justification for this ordeal to which he invites men, for this mass political application of the ancient doctrine of turning the other cheek?" The answer is found in the realization that unearned suffering is redemptive. Suffering, the nonviolent resister realizes, has tremendous educational and transforming possibilities. "Things of fundamental importance to people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering," said Gandhi. He continues: "Suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his ears which are otherwise shut to the voice of reason."

A fifth point concerning nonviolent resistance is that it avoids not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. The nonviolent resister not only refuses to shoot his opponent but he also refuses to hate him. At the center of non-

VIDEO - make opponent inflict suffering - to change his
own values, perceptions...

56 violence stands the principle of love. The nonviolent resister would contend that in the struggle for human dignity, the oppressed people of the world must not succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter or indulging in hate campaigns. To retaliate in kind would do nothing but intensify the existence of hate in the universe. Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough and morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love to the center of our lives.

In speaking of love at this point, we are not referring to some sentimental or affectionate emotion. It would be nonsense to urge men to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense. Love in this connection means understanding, redemptive good will. Here the Greek language comes to our aid. There are three words for love in the Greek New Testament. First, there is *eros*. In Platonic philosophy *eros* meant the yearning of the soul for the realm of the divine. It has come now to mean a sort of aesthetic or romantic love. Second, there is *philia* which means intimate affection between personal friends. *Philia* denotes a sort of reciprocal love; the person loves because he is loved. When we speak of loving those who oppose us, we refer to neither *eros* nor *philia*; we speak of a love which is expressed in the Greek word *agape*. *Agape* means understanding, redeeming good will for all men. It is an overflowing love which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless, and creative. It is not set in motion by any quality or function of its object. It is the love of God operating in the human heart.

✓ *Agape* is disinterested love. It is a love in which the individual seeks not his own good, but the good of his neighbor (I Cor. 10:24). *Agape* does not begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy people, or any qualities people possess. It begins by loving others *for their sakes*. It is an entirely "neighbor-re-

garding concern for others," v every man it meets. Therefore, tween friend and enemy; it is d an individual merely on account for the sake of the benefits to rather than for the friend's own to assure oneself that Love is the enemy-neighbor from whom turn, but only hostility and per-

Another basic point about *ag* need of the other person—his n the human family. The Samari Jericho Road was "good" because that he was presented with. God because man needs his love. St. Pa of redemption was done "while w the point of our greatest need fo personality is greatly distorted b greatly scarred, he needs the love love the white man, because the remove his tensions, insecurities—

Agape is not a weak, passive is love seeking to preserve and c on community even when one s ingness to sacrifice in the interest ness to go to any length to res at the first mile, but it goes the se It is a willingness to forgive, no seven to restore community. Th of the length to which God wi community. The resurrection is a the forces that seek to block co

principle of love. The nonviolent resister in the struggle for human dignity, the oppressed world must not succumb to the temptation of indulging in hate campaigns. To retaliate only intensify the existence of hate in the way of life, someone must have sense enough to cut off the chain of hate. This is projecting the ethic of love to the center

At this point, we are not referring to some innate emotion. It would be nonsense to call oppressors in an affectionate sense. Love means understanding, redemptive good will. Love comes to our aid. There are three words in the New Testament. First, there is *eros*. In Greek it meant the yearning of the soul for the good. It has come now to mean a sort of aesthetic love. Second, there is *philia* which means intimate love between friends. *Philia* denotes a sort of reciprocal love because he is loved. When we speak of love to oppose us, we refer to neither *eros* nor *philia* but a love which is expressed in the Greek word *agape*. It is understanding, redeeming good will for all men. It is a love which is purely spontaneous, uncalculated and creative. It is not set in motion by the desire for its object. It is the love of God operating.

It is a love in which the individual is loved for his sake, but the good of his neighbor (I Cor. 13:3) is the beginning. We begin by discriminating between worthy and unworthy people on any qualities people possess. It begins with the good of their sakes. It is an entirely "neighbor-re-

garding concern for others," which discovers the neighbor in every man it meets. Therefore, *agape* makes no distinction between friend and enemy; it is directed toward both. If one loves an individual merely on account of his friendliness, he loves him for the sake of the benefits to be gained from the friendship, rather than for the friend's own sake. Consequently, the best way to assure oneself that Love is disinterested is to have love for the enemy-neighbor from whom you can expect no good in return, but only hostility and persecution.

Another basic point about *agape* is that it springs from the need of the other person—his need for belonging to the best in the human family. The Samaritan who helped the Jew on the Jericho Road was "good" because he responded to the human need that he was presented with. God's love is eternal and fails not because man needs his love. St. Paul assures us that the loving act of redemption was done "while we were yet sinners"—that is, at the point of our greatest need for love. Since the white man's personality is greatly distorted by segregation, and his soul is greatly scarred, he needs the love of the Negro. The Negro must love the white man, because the white man needs his love to remove his tensions, insecurities, and fears.

Agape is not a weak, passive love. It is love in action. *Agape* is love seeking to preserve and create community. It is insistence on community even when one seeks to break it. *Agape* is a willingness to sacrifice in the interest of mutuality. *Agape* is a willingness to go to any length to restore community. It doesn't stop at the first mile, but it goes the second mile to restore community. It is a willingness to forgive, not seven times, but seventy times seven to restore community. The cross is the eternal expression of the length to which God will go in order to restore broken community. The resurrection is a symbol of God's triumph over all the forces that seek to block community. The Holy Spirit is the

continuing community creating reality that moves through history. He who works against community is working against the whole of creation. Therefore, if I respond to hate with a reciprocal hate I do nothing but intensify the cleavage in broken community. I can only close the gap in broken community by meeting hate with love. If I meet hate with hate, I become depersonalized, because creation is so designed that my personality can only be fulfilled in the context of community. Booker T. Washington was right: "Let no man pull you so low as to make you hate him." When he pulls you that low he brings you to the point of working against community; he drags you to the point of defying creation, and thereby becoming depersonalized.

In the final analysis, *agape* means a recognition of the fact that all life is interrelated. All humanity is involved in a single process, and all men are brothers. To the degree that I harm my brother, no matter what he is doing to me, to that extent I am harming myself. For example, white men often refuse federal aid to education in order to avoid giving the Negro his rights; but because all men are brothers they cannot deny Negro children without harming their own. They end, all efforts to the contrary, by hurting themselves. Why is this? Because men are brothers. If you harm me, you harm yourself.

Love, *agape*, is the only cement that can hold this broken community together. When I am commanded to love, I am commanded to restore community, to resist injustice, and to meet the needs of my brothers.

A sixth basic fact about nonviolent resistance is that it is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice. Consequently, the believer in nonviolence has deep faith in the future. This faith is another reason why the nonviolent resister can accept suffering without retaliation. For he knows that in his struggle for justice he has cosmic companionship. It is true

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Nonviolence means a recognition of the fact that all humanity is involved in a single process, a single life. To the degree that I harm my brother, I harm myself. To the degree that I love my brother, I love myself. Going to me, to that extent I am harming myself. White men often refuse federal aid to education, giving the Negro his rights; but because they cannot deny Negro children without any end, all efforts to the contrary, by hurting the Negro, they are hurting themselves. Because men are brothers. If you harm one, you harm yourself.

Nonviolence is the only cement that can hold this broken community together. I am commanded to love, I am commanded to resist injustice, and to meet the challenge of the community.

Nonviolent resistance is that it is based on the fact that the universe is on the side of justice. Confidence in nonviolence has deep faith in the fact that the universe is on the side of justice. Another reason why the nonviolent resister does not retaliate. For he knows that in the end, he has cosmic companionship. It is true

g? (unfamiliar by date).

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that there are devout believers in nonviolence who find it difficult to believe in a personal God. But even these persons believe in the existence of some creative force that works for universal wholeness. Whether we call it an unconscious process, an impersonal Brahman, or a Personal Being of matchless power and infinite love, there is a creative force in this universe that works to bring the disconnected aspects of reality into a harmonious whole.

collectively call for compliance with the violence. This has been done by white rhmond, Salinas, and other cities, and not knowledge, but his job. It is difficult for all of the ministers in a city. If ever the month decide to declare in a united voice on the question of race, the transition an integrated society will be infinitely

role of the Christian minister today must e need in prophecy. Not every minister one man has prepared for the ordeals of willing to suffer courageously for right- em of man in America soon make hearts all rise up, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," 1, "... let justice roll down like waters, n ever turning stream."

the South have already been willing to ay. I have nothing but praise for these of Jesus Christ and rabbis of the Jewish allineadingly before threats and intimidat- unpopularity, even at times in physical petrium of the Fatherhood of God and the r such noble servants of God there is the s of Jesus: "Blessed are ye, when men persecute you, and shall say all manner of for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding eward in heaven: for so persecuted they e before you."

challenge and the sublime opportunity: st work toward fashioning a truly great

Christian nation. If the church accepts the challenge with devo- tion and valor, the day will be speeded when men everywhere will recognize that they "are all one in Christ Jesus."

Finally, the Negro himself has a decisive role to play if integration is to become a reality. Indeed, if first-class citizenship is to become a reality for the Negro he must assume the primary responsibility for making it so. Integration is not some lavish dish that the federal government or the white liberal will pass out on a silver platter while the Negro merely furnishes the appetite. One of the most damaging effects of past segregation on the per- sonality of the Negro may well be that he has been victimized with the delusion that others should be more concerned than himself about his citizenship rights.

In this period of social change, the Negro must come to see that there is much he himself can do about his plight. He may be un- educated or poverty-stricken, but these handicaps must not pre- vent him from seeing that he has within his being the power to alter his fate. The Negro can take direct action against injustice without waiting for the government to act or a majority to agree with him or a court to rule in his favor.

Oppressed people deal with their oppression in three char- acteristic ways. One way is acquiescence: the oppressed resign themselves to their doom. They tacitly adjust themselves to oppression, and thereby become conditioned to it. In every movement toward freedom some of the oppressed prefer to re- main oppressed. Almost 2800 years ago Moses set out to lead the children of Israel from the slavery of Egypt to the freedom of the promised land. He soon discovered that slaves do not always welcome their deliverers. They become accustomed to being slaves. They would rather bear those ills they have, as Shake-

speare pointed out, than flee to others that they know not of. They prefer the "fleshpots of Egypt" to the ordeals of emancipation.

There is such a thing as the freedom of exhaustion. Some people are so worn down by the yoke of oppression that they give up. A few years ago in the slum areas of Atlanta, a Negro guitarist used to sing almost daily: "Ben down so long that down don't bother me." This is the type of negative freedom and resignation that often engulfs the life of the oppressed.

But this is not the way out. To accept passively an unjust system is to cooperate with that system; thereby the oppressed become as evil as the oppressor. Noncooperation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is cooperation with good. The oppressed must never allow the conscience of the oppressor to slumber. Religion reminds every man that he is his brother's keeper. To accept injustice or segregation passively is to say to the oppressor that his actions are morally right. It is a way of allowing his conscience to fall asleep. At this moment the oppressed fails to be his brother's keeper. So acquiescence—while often the easier way—is not the moral way. It is the way of the coward. The Negro cannot win the respect of his oppressor by acquiescing; he merely increases the oppressor's arrogance and contempt. Acquiescence is interpreted as proof of the Negro's inferiority. The Negro cannot win the respect of the white people of the South or the peoples of the world if he is willing to sell the future of his children for his personal and immediate comfort and safety.

A second way that oppressed people sometimes deal with oppression is to resort to physical violence and corroding hatred. Violence often brings about momentary results. Nations have frequently won their independence in battle. But in spite of tem-

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porary victories, violence solves no social problem; it complicates ones.

Violence as a way of achieving freedom is impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it ends in destruction for all, leaving everybody blind. It is immoral because it is the opponent rather than the ally of freedom; it annihilates rather than to create. It thrives on hatred rather than love. It makes brotherhood impossible rather than dialogue. Violence breeds bitterness in the survivors and echoes through time saying "I will be a sword." History is cluttered with the failures to follow this command.

If the American Negro acquiesces to the temptation of violence, freedom, future generations will inherit a night of bitterness, and our country will be a less reign of meaningless chaos.

The third way open to the oppressed is the way of nonviolence. In Hegelian philosophy, truth is achieved through the struggle of violence—while avoiding the use of violence. The nonviolent resister argues that one should not be physically violent, but he balances the equation by saying that evil must be met with violence of the former and the viol-

STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM

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porary victories, violence never brings permanent peace. It solves no social problem; it merely creates new and more complicated ones.

Violence as a way of achieving racial justice is both impractical and immoral. It is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all. The old law of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind. It is immoral because it seeks to humiliate the opponent rather than win his understanding; it seeks to annihilate rather than to convert. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys community and makes brotherhood impossible. It leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. Violence ends by defeating itself. It creates bitterness in the survivors and brutality in the destroyers. A voice echoes through time saying to every potential Peter, "Put up your sword." History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations that failed to follow this command.

If the American Negro and other victims of oppression succumb to the temptation of using violence in the struggle for freedom, future generations will be the recipients of a desolate night of bitterness, and our chief legacy to them will be an endless reign of meaningless chaos. Violence is not the way.

The third way open to oppressed people in their quest for freedom is the way of nonviolent resistance. Like the synthesis in Hegelian philosophy, the principle of nonviolent resistance seeks to reconcile the truths of two opposites—acquiescence and violence—while avoiding the extremes and immoralities of both. The nonviolent resister agrees with the person who acquiesces that one should not be physically aggressive toward his opponent; but he balances the equation by agreeing with the person of violence that evil must be resisted. He avoids the nonresistance of the former and the violent resistance of the latter. With non-

Specimen: NVR applied to Arab - few disputes.

** but NVR may humiliate more than violence, which "pays his respects"*

2 paths to two different "stable" solutions; the one associated with violence, the

violent resistance, no individual or group need submit to any wrong, nor need anyone resort to violence in order to right a wrong.

It seems to me that this is the method that must guide the actions of the Negro in the present crisis in race relations. Through nonviolent resistance the Negro will be able to rise to the noble height of opposing the unjust system while loving the perpetrators of the system. The Negro must work passionately and unrelentingly for full stature as a citizen, but he must not use inferior methods to gain it. He must never come to terms with falsehood, malice, hate, or destruction.

Nonviolent resistance makes it possible for the Negro to remain in the South and struggle for his rights. The Negro's problem will not be solved by running away. He cannot listen to the glib suggestion of those who would urge him to migrate en masse to other sections of the country. By grasping his great opportunity in the South he can make a lasting contribution to the moral strength of the nation and set a sublime example of courage for generations yet unborn.

By nonviolent resistance, the Negro can also enlist all men of good will in his struggle for equality. The problem is not a purely racial one, with Negroes set against whites. In the end, it is not a struggle between people at all, but a tension between justice and injustice. Nonviolent resistance is not aimed against oppressors but against oppression. Under its banner consciences, not racial groups, are enlisted.

If the Negro is to achieve the goal of integration, he must organize himself into a militant and nonviolent mass movement. All three elements are indispensable. The movement for equality and justice can only be a success if it has both a mass and militant character; the barriers to be overcome require both. Nonviolence is an imperative in order to bring about ultimate community.

Is it necessary? (look at US relations with Japan & Germany).

A mass movement of a time committed to nonviolence in turn breeds anarchy. The sympathy of the uncommitted that bloodshed will engender encourages the opposition; however, the mass movement, resolutely toward its goal, stigmatizes and practitioners support is magnetically attracted while those who employ violence overwhelm sentiment against it.

Only through a nonviolent community can fear be mitigated. A fear that if the Negro should without restraint or pity to the years. It is something that treats a son. One day that parents only to discover that the son suddenly afraid—fearful that power to repay his parent for

The Negro, once a helpless culturally, and economically. The job of the Negro is to seek fear, that the Negro understands forget the past. He must seek is justice, for both his movement exercising nonviolence under discipline, a demonstration such a movement attained a power creatively and not violently.

Nonviolence can touch men

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A mass movement of a militant quality that is not at the same time committed to nonviolence tends to generate conflict, which in turn breeds anarchy. The support of the participants and the sympathy of the uncommitted are both inhibited by the threat that bloodshed will engulf the community. This reaction in turn encourages the opposition to threaten and resort to force. When, however, the mass movement repudiates violence while moving resolutely toward its goal, its opponents are revealed as the instigators and practitioners of violence if it occurs. Then public support is magnetically attracted to the advocates of nonviolence, while those who employ violence are literally disarmed by overwhelming sentiment against their stand.

Only through a nonviolent approach can the fears of the white community be mitigated. A guilt-ridden white minority lives in fear that if the Negro should ever attain power, he would act without restraint or pity to revenge the injustices and brutality of the years. It is something like a parent who continually mistreats a son. One day that parent raises his hand to strike the son, only to discover that the son is now as tall as he is. The parent is suddenly afraid—fearful that the son will use his new physical power to repay his parent for all the blows of the past.

The Negro, once a helpless child, has now grown up politically, culturally, and economically. Many white men fear retaliation. The job of the Negro is to show them that they have nothing to fear, that the Negro understands and forgives and is ready to forget the past. He must convince the white man that all he seeks is justice, *for both himself and the white man*. A mass movement exercising nonviolence is an object lesson in power under discipline, a demonstration to the white community that if such a movement attained a degree of strength, it would use its power creatively and not vengefully.

Nonviolence can touch men where the law cannot reach them.

When the law regulates behavior it plays an indirect part in molding public sentiment. The enforcement of the law is itself a form of peaceful persuasion. But the law needs help. The courts can order desegregation of the public schools. But what can be done to mitigate the fears, to disperse the hatred, violence, and irrationality gathered around school integration, to take the initiative out of the hands of racial demagogues, to release respect for the law? In the end, for laws to be obeyed, men must believe they are right.

Here nonviolence comes in as the ultimate form of persuasion. It is the method which seeks to implement the just law by appealing to the conscience of the great decent majority who through blindness, fear, pride, or irrationality have allowed their consciences to sleep.

The nonviolent resisters can summarize their message in the following simple terms: We will take direct action against injustice without waiting for other agencies to act. We will not obey unjust laws or submit to unjust practices. We will do this peacefully, openly, cheerfully because our aim is to persuade. We adopt the means of nonviolence because our end is a community at peace with itself. We will try to persuade with our words, but if our words fail, we will try to persuade with our acts. We will always be willing to talk and seek fair compromise, but we are ready to suffer when necessary and even risk our lives to become witnesses to the truth as we see it.

The way of nonviolence means a willingness to suffer and sacrifice. It may mean going to jail. If such is the case the resister must be willing to fill the jail houses of the South. It may even mean physical death. But if physical death is the price that a man must pay to free his children and his white brethren from a permanent death of the spirit, then nothing could be more redemptive.

What is the Negro's best defense against acts of violence in-

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

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flicted upon him? As Dr. Kenneth Clark has said so eloquently,
"His only defense is to meet every act of barbarity, illegality,
cruelty and injustice toward an individual Negro with the fact
that 100 more Negroes will present themselves in his place as
potential victims." Every time one Negro school teacher is fired
for believing in integration, a thousand others should be ready to
take the same stand. If the oppressors bomb the home of one
Negro for his protest, they must be made to realize that to press
back the rising tide of the Negro's courage they will have to bomb
hundreds more, and even then they will fail.

Faced with this dynamic unity, this amazing self-respect, this
willingness to suffer, and this refusal to hit back, the oppressor
will find, as oppressors have always found, that he is glutted
with his own barbarity. Forced to stand before the world and his
God splattered with the blood of his brother, he will call an end
to his self-defeating massacre.

American Negroes must come to the point where they can say
to their white brothers, paraphrasing the words of Gandhi: "We
will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to
endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul
force. We will not hate you, but we cannot in all good conscience
obey your unjust laws. Do to us what you will and we will still
love you. Bomb our homes and threaten our children; send your
hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities and drag
us out on some wayside road, beating us and leaving us half dead,
and we will still love you. But we will soon wear you down by our
capacity to suffer. And in winning our freedom we will so appeal
to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process."

Realism impels me to admit that many Negroes will find it
difficult to follow the path of nonviolence. Some will consider it
senseless; some will argue that they have neither the strength nor
the courage to join in such a mass demonstration of nonviolent

* ideology ? (like the faith of the cowboyman ...)

action. As E. Franklin Frazier points out in *Black Bourgeoisie*, many Negroes are occupied in a middle-class struggle for status and prestige. They are more concerned about "conspicuous consumption" than about the cause of justice, and are probably not prepared for the ordeals and sacrifices involved in nonviolent action. Fortunately, however, the success of this method is not dependent on its unanimous acceptance. A few Negroes in every community, unswervingly committed to the nonviolent way, can persuade hundreds of others at least to use nonviolence as a technique and serve as the moral force to awaken the slumbering national conscience. Thoreau was thinking of such a creative minority when he said: "I know this well, that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name—if ten honest men only—aye, if one honest man, in the state of Massachusetts, ceasing to hold slaves, were actually to withdraw from the copartnership, and be locked up in the county jail therefore, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be, what is once well done is done forever."

Mahatma Gandhi never had more than one hundred persons absolutely committed to his philosophy. But with this small group of devoted followers, he galvanized the whole of India, and through a magnificent feat of nonviolence challenged the might of the British Empire and won freedom for his people.

This method of nonviolence will not work miracles overnight. Men are not easily moved from their mental ruts, their prejudiced and irrational feelings. When the underprivileged demand freedom, the privileged first react with bitterness and resistance. Even when the demands are couched in nonviolent terms, the initial response is the same. Nehru once remarked that the British were never so angry as when the Indians resisted them with nonviolence, that he never saw eyes so full of hate as those of the

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

British troops to whom he turned them with lathis. But nonviolent remands and hearts of the Indians, he may have appeared. "We cast away in the end the British not only grant to have a new respect for the India based on complete equality exist within the Commonwealth.

In the South too, the initial whiff has been bitter. I do not predict that come to Montgomery in a few months more complicated than independent Negroes of Montgomery are already of the protest. And I expect that throughout the United States will because of the courage, the dignity nine children of Little Rock, and the Clinton, and Sturges. And I believe country are being affected too, nation's conscience is being stirred.

The nonviolent approach does heart of the oppressor. It first does souls of those committed to it. It calls up resources of strength and they had. Finally it reaches the science that reconciliation becomes.

I suggest this approach because reestablish the broken community enforcement agencies will be of desegregation. But desegregation, step toward the ultimate Desegregation will break down

n Frazier points out in *Black Bourgeoisie*, occupied in a middle-class struggle for status are more concerned about "conspicuous consumption" for the cause of justice, and are probably not the deals and sacrifices involved in nonviolent resistance. However, the success of this method is not unanimous acceptance. A few Negroes in every community committed to the nonviolent way, can influence others at least to use nonviolence as a moral force to awaken the slumbering masses. Thoreau was thinking of such a creative force: "I know this well, that if one thousand, if not ten thousand, men whom I could name—if ten honest men in the state of Massachusetts, cease actually to withdraw from the copartnership in the county jail therefore, it would be the beginning of a new America. For it matters not how small the effort is, what is once well done is done forever."

Never had more than one hundred persons been added to his philosophy. But with this small group, he galvanized the whole of India, and his feat of nonviolence challenged the might of the British and won freedom for his people.

Nonviolence will not work miracles overnight. Freed from their mental ruts, their prejudiced views. When the underprivileged demand freedom, they first react with bitterness and resistance. Even when couched in nonviolent terms, the initial response. Nehru once remarked that the British were not when the Indians resisted them with nonviolence. They saw eyes so full of hate as those of the

British troops to whom he turned the other cheek when they beat him with lathis. But nonviolent resistance at least changed the minds and hearts of the Indians, however impervious the British may have appeared. "We cast away our fear," says Nehru. And in the end the British not only granted freedom to India but came to have a new respect for the Indians. Today a mutual friendship based on complete equality exists between these two peoples within the Commonwealth.

In the South too, the initial white reaction to Negro resistance has been bitter. I do not predict that a similar happy ending will come to Montgomery in a few months, because integration is more complicated than independence. But I know that the Negroes of Montgomery are already walking straighter because of the protest. And I expect that this generation of Negro children throughout the United States will grow up stronger and better because of the courage, the dignity, and the suffering of the nine children of Little Rock, and their counterparts in Nashville, Clinton, and Sturges. And I believe that the white people of this country are being affected too, that beneath the surface this nation's conscience is being stirred.

The nonviolent approach does not immediately change the heart of the oppressor. It first does something to the hearts and souls of those committed to it. It gives them new self-respect; it calls up resources of strength and courage that they did not know they had. Finally it reaches the opponent and so stirs his conscience that reconciliation becomes a reality.

I suggest this approach because I think it is the only way to reestablish the broken community. Court orders and federal enforcement agencies will be of inestimable value in achieving desegregation. But desegregation is only a partial, though necessary, step toward the ultimate goal which we seek to realize. Desegregation will break down the legal barriers, and bring men

together physically. But something must happen so to touch the hearts and souls of men that they will come together, not because the law says it, but because it is natural and right. In other words, our ultimate goal is integration which is genuine intergroup and interpersonal living. Only through nonviolence can this goal be attained, for the aftermath of nonviolence is reconciliation and the creation of the beloved community.

It is becoming clear that the Negro is in for a season of suffering. As victories for civil rights mount in the federal courts, angry passions and deep prejudices are further aroused. The mountain of state and local segregation laws still stands. Negro leaders continue to be arrested and harassed under city ordinances, and their homes continue to be bombed. State laws continue to be enacted to circumvent integration. I pray that, recognizing the necessity of suffering, the Negro will make of it a virtue. To suffer in a righteous cause is to grow to our humanity's full stature. If only to save himself from bitterness, the Negro needs the vision to see the ordeals of this generation as the opportunity to transfigure himself and American society. If he has to go to jail for the cause of freedom, let him enter it in the fashion Gandhi urged his countrymen, "as the bridegroom enters the bride's chamber"—that is, with a little trepidation but with a great expectation.

Nonviolence is a way of humility and self-restraint. We Negroes talk a great deal about our rights, and rightly so. We proudly proclaim that three-fourths of the people of the world are colored. We have the privilege of watching in our generation the great drama of freedom and independence as it unfolds in Asia and Africa. All of these things are in line with the work of providence. We must be sure, however, that we accept them in the right spirit. In an effort to achieve freedom in America, Asia, and Africa we must not try to leap from a position of disadvantage to one of advantage, thus subverting justice. We must seek democracy

and not the substitution of one evil for another. We must never be to defeat or humiliation. We must not come victimized with a philosophy that is not interested merely in the needs of white men, and yellow men; God is interested in the whole human race.

The nonviolent approach to the debated question of gradualism prevents one from falling into the trap of an excuse for do-nothingism and inaction. On the other hand it is a philosophy which estrange without reconciliation. It is blind to the necessities of the situation for moving toward the goal of justice and reasonableness. But it also is a philosophy that is up in the move toward justice and an unjust status quo. It recognizes the need for change overnight. But it causes one to wait until the next morning.

Through nonviolence we can develop the psychology of victors. That is the work of the NAACP, we have won the courts. But we must not make every decision with an uncertainty, and with acceptance of the status quo. Orders pose for them. We must win. Our victories will be triumphs for the people.

Nonviolence is essential for the growth. On the operation with evil; on the the constructive forces of noncoöperation ends where

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 come victimized with a philosophy of black supremacy. God is
 not interested merely in the freedom of black men, and brown
 men, and yellow men; God is interested in the freedom of the
 whole human race.

The nonviolent approach provides an answer to the long de-
 bated question of gradualism *versus* immediacy. On the one hand
 it prevents one from falling into the sort of patience which is an
 excuse for do-nothingism and escapism, ending up in standstill-
 ism. On the other hand it saves one from the irresponsible words
 which estrange without reconciling and the hasty judgment which
 is blind to the necessities of social process. It recognizes the need
 for moving toward the goal of justice with wise restraint and calm
 reasonableness. But it also recognizes the immorality of slowing
 up in the move toward justice and capitulating to the guardians of
 an unjust status quo. It recognizes that social change cannot come
 overnight. But it causes one to work as if it were a possibility the
 next morning.

Through nonviolence we avoid the temptation of taking on the
 psychology of victors. Thanks largely to the noble and invaluable
 work of the NAACP, we have won great victories in the federal
 courts. But we must not be self-satisfied. We must respond to
 every decision with an understanding of those who have opposed
 us, and with acceptance of the new adjustments that the court
 orders pose for them. We must act in such a way that our vic-
 tories will be triumphs for good will in all men, white and Negro.

Nonviolence is essentially a positive concept. Its corollary must
 always be growth. On the one hand nonviolence requires nonco-
 operation with evil; on the other hand it requires coöperation with
 the constructive forces of good. Without this constructive aspect
 noncoöperation ends where it begins. Therefore, the Negro must

get to work on a program with a broad range of positive goals.

One point in the Negro's program should be a plan to improve his own economic lot. Through the establishment of credit unions, savings and loan associations, and coöperative enterprises the Negro can greatly improve his economic status. He must develop habits of thrift and techniques of wise investment. He must not wait for the end of the segregation that lies at the basis of his economic deprivation; he must act now to lift himself up by his own bootstraps.

The constructive program ahead must include a campaign to get Negroes to register and vote. Certainly they face many external barriers. All types of underhand methods are still being used in the South to prevent the Negroes from voting, and the success of these efforts is not only unjust, it is a real embarrassment to the nation we love and must protect. The advocacy of free elections in Europe by American officials is hypocrisy when free elections are not held in great sections of America.

But external resistance is not the only present barrier to Negro voting. Apathy among the Negroes themselves is also a factor. Even where the polls are open to all, Negroes have shown themselves too slow to exercise their voting privileges. There must be a concerted effort on the part of Negro leaders to arouse their people from their apathetic indifference to this obligation of citizenship. In the past, apathy was a moral failure. Today, it is a form of moral and political suicide.

The constructive program ahead must include a vigorous attempt to improve the Negro's personal standards. It must be reiterated that the standards of the Negro as a group lag behind not because of an inherent inferiority, but because of the fact that segregation does exist. The "behavior deviants" within the Negro community stem from the economic deprivation, emotional frustration, and social isolation which are the inevitable con-

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comitants of segregation. When the gation should continue because of he fails to see that the standards l

Yet Negroes must be honest enough do often fall short. One of the s ability to rise to the point of sel objects of criticism from white me are maliciously directed and mixed out the elements of truth and ma reconstruction. We must not let the injustice lull us into abrogating resp

Our crime rate is far too high. Our quently far too low. Too often those class live above our means, spend r frivolities, and fail to give to seriou educational institutions that so desp too often loud and boisterous, and s Even the most poverty-stricken amon bar of soap; even the most uneduc morals. Through community agenc Negro leaders must develop a pos Negro youth can become adjusted their general level of behavior. Since sense of futility and despair, Negro their children the love, attention, a segregated society deprives them of here and now we will go a long wa arguments of the segregationist.

This then must be our present pr to all forms of racial injustice, inclu practices, even when this means go bold, constructive action to end the

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comitants of segregation. When the white man argues that segregation should continue because of the Negro's lagging standards, he fails to see that the standards lag because of segregation.

Yet Negroes must be honest enough to admit that our standards do often fall short. One of the sure signs of maturity is the ability to rise to the point of self-criticism. Whenever we are objects of criticism from white men, even though the criticisms are maliciously directed and mixed with half-truths, we must pick out the elements of truth and make them the basis of creative reconstruction. We must not let the fact that we are the victims of injustice lull us into abrogating responsibility for our own lives.

Our crime rate is far too high. Our level of cleanliness is frequently far too low. Too often those of us who are in the middle class live above our means, spend money on nonessentials and frivolities, and fail to give to serious causes, organizations, and educational institutions that so desperately need funds. We are too often loud and boisterous, and spend far too much on drink. Even the most poverty-stricken among us can purchase a ten-cent bar of soap; even the most uneducated among us can have high morals. Through community agencies and religious institutions Negro leaders must develop a positive program through which Negro youth can become adjusted to urban living and improve their general level of behavior. Since crime often grows out of a sense of futility and despair, Negro parents must be urged to give their children the love, attention, and sense of belonging that a segregated society deprives them of. By improving our standards here and now we will go a long way toward breaking down the arguments of the segregationist.

This then must be our present program: Nonviolent resistance to all forms of racial injustice, including state and local laws and practices, even when this means going to jail; and imaginative, bold, constructive action to end the demoralization caused by the

legacy of slavery and segregation, inferior schools, slums, and second-class citizenship. The nonviolent struggle, if conducted with the dignity and courage already shown by the people of Montgomery and the children of Little Rock, will in itself help end the demoralization; but a new frontal assault on the poverty, disease, and ignorance of a people too long ignored by America's conscience will make victory more certain.

In short, we must work on two fronts. On the one hand, we must continue to resist the system of segregation which is the basic cause of our lagging standards; on the other hand we must work constructively to improve the standards themselves. There must be a rhythmic alternation between attacking the causes and healing the effects.

This is a great hour for the Negro. The challenge is here. To become the instruments of a great idea is a privilege that history gives only occasionally. Arnold Toynbee says in *A Study of History* that it may be the Negro who will give the new spiritual dynamic to Western civilization that it so desperately needs to survive. I hope this is possible. The spiritual power that the Negro can radiate to the world comes from love, understanding, good will, and nonviolence. It may even be possible for the Negro, through adherence to nonviolence, so to challenge the nations of the world that they will seriously seek an alternative to war and destruction. In a day when Sputniks and Explorers dash through outer space and guided ballistic missiles are carving highways of death through the stratosphere, nobody can win a war. Today the choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence. The Negro may be God's appeal to this age—an age drifting rapidly to its doom. The eternal appeal takes the form of a warning: "All who take the sword will perish by the sword."

Appendix

NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

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 Mr. Fred D. Gray, Att'y.
 Rev. H. H. Hubbard
 Dr. Moses W. Jones*
 Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 Mr. Charles Langford, Att'y.
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* Added